

Town of Newfields
First Session of the 2015 Newfields Elementary School
Deliberative Session February 2, 2015

The deliberative session scheduled for February 2, 2015 was postponed until Wednesday February 4, 2015 due to inclement weather.

School Board Members: Chairman James McIlroy and Karla Dalton. Absent from the meeting was Kirsten Lord. Kirsten was able to call in and join the meeting remotely.

Moderator: John Hayden

Town Clerk: Sue McKinnon

Also in attendance were Principal Kate Segal and Business Administrator Amy Ransom.

Moderator John Hayden opened the meeting at 6:30pm and called for a pledge of allegiance. He introduced the School Board and reviewed the rules and procedures for the meeting.

Article 1. Shall the Newfields School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$2,421,720? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$2,413,810, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Newfields School Board or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. The Newfields School Board recommends. The Newfields Budget Advisory Committee recommends.

Chairman James McIlroy stated that the budget was reviewed in detail at the budget hearing on January 10, 2015. The increase in the budget over last year is 1.95%. The default budget is 1.62% higher than last year and includes increases required by law and contracts. The overall increase is less than \$8,000. The administration has done a superb job prioritizing.

Michael Woodworth asked if the teaching staff consists of the same teachers as ten years ago.

James McIlroy commented that all teachers have been employed in Newfields for at least ten years with the exception of one who has been employed for two years. Nine classroom teachers are at their maximum pay scale. Once a teacher has been employed for ten years there are no more step increases unless they obtain further education. The Board does not anticipate major changes in this regard.

With no further discussion, Article 1 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 2. To see if the school district will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Newfields School Board and the Newfields Paraprofessional Association which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

Fiscal Year	Estimated Increase
2015	\$ 9,130
2016	\$ 5,950
2017	\$ 6,106
2018	\$ 6,196

and further to raise and appropriate \$9,130.00 for the current fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels. The Newfields School Board recommends approval of this warrant article. The Newfields School Board recommends this appropriation.

James McIlroy stated that last year the Town supported a four year agreement for the union professionals. This year they are asking for a four year agreement for the paraprofessionals. The pay raises are in line with the general relationship and attitude toward the town.

There were no questions. Article 2 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 3. Shall the School District raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000.00 to be added to the School Building Maintenance Fund established at the 1992 School District meeting for the purpose of repairing and maintaining school buildings? The Newfields School Board recommends this appropriation.

James McIlroy mentioned that this article has been put forward each year for maintenance of the building. Last year doors were repaired, the roof was repaired and trees in striking distance of the building were removed. The big item this year will be the replacement of the heating unit above the all purpose room at a cost of \$40,000 to \$50,000. The fund currently has \$62,000 in it. The funds have been used yearly for basic maintenance, painting and cleaning.

There was no discussion. Article 3 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 4. To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000.00 to be added to the Special Education Expendable Trust Fund previously established. This sum to come from June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1. No amount to be raised from taxation. The Newfields School Board recommends this appropriation.

James McIlroy said last year they started with this article and it passed. It is a way to start building up funds in case there are unexpected costs associated with special education. The expenses could come from a mid year diagnosis of a special education student or a new resident with special education needs. By law the School is required to fulfill the needs of special education students. The alternative would be to call a special meeting to raise additional funds but that would be costly. This is a good way to set aside money for a specific purpose with no money to be raised from taxation.

If the fund happens to build up significantly the board would stop asking for the appropriation. These funds are currently in the budget from last year and were not expended. The School was able to give back \$60,000 to the Town last year.

Article 4 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 5. To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000.00 for the purpose of offering a world language program at Newfields Elementary School.

The School Board agreed to put forward this article based on interest from a limited number of parents. The Board abstained from making a recommendation and wanted to leave the decision up to the townspeople; it was an issue of priority. No one was present to support the article.

James McIlroy said there are clear benefits to offering a language at this age. For \$20,000 the program would be offered for 1/2 hour per week for the entire year or 1 hour per week for 1/2 year. It will be classroom instruction with a certified teacher. It is questionable as to how much value the students would obtain from the program. Currently, second languages begin to be offered in middle school.

Maggie Doane asked for more information regarding which language would be taught and how many parents were interested.

The language would be Spanish because it is the most common and easiest to staff. There were only a handful of parents interested in offering a second language.

Maggie Doane mentioned that there are private programs in the area after school that those parents can pay for. She asked for the Principals input. Kate said Spanish is not mandated by the State but she values the opinion of the townspeople. If the article passes she is willing to put together a program.

Maggie does not see the benefit of raising \$20,000 on the whim of a few folks. She would like to zero out the dollar amount of the article.

Jim Lieberman suggested allowing the voters to decide if offering Spanish is a good idea.

Maggie Doane is concerned that the voters do not have enough information in the warrant article. The way the article is written it is not known that Spanish is the language of choice and that only a handful of parents brought the idea of a second language forward.

A motion was made by Maggie Doane and seconded by Don Doane to amend the dollar amount of the warrant article to \$0.00. The motion was voted on and failed. Yes-4, No-5

Article 5 shall be place on the ballot as written.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:06pm.

Respectfully submitted,Sue McKinnon

